



Executive Committee Meeting April 24, 2001 Draft - Meeting Summary

The following is a summary of presentations given, issues raised, actions undertaken or recommendations made. When possible, lengthy discussions have been summarized into themes or summary statements.

Executive Committee members present:

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|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> George Kargianis
Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rob McKenna
Vice-Chair, King County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gary Hughes
FHWA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Santos Contreras (Alt.)
City of Kirkland | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sen. Horn
WA State Senate | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harold Taniguchi (Alt.)
King County |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connie Marshall
City of Bellevue | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Edwards
PSRC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Randy Corman
City of Renton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Okamoto
WSDOT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemarie Ives
City of Redmond | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Mullet
City of Tukwila |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dick Paylor (Alt.)
City of Bothell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joan McBride
City of Kirkland | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Degginger (Alt.)
City of Bellevue |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonny Putter (Alt.)
City of Newcastle | <input type="checkbox"/> Pam Carter (Alt.)
City of Tukwila | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aubrey Davis (Alt.)
WSTC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Dye (Alt.)
WSDOT | <input type="checkbox"/> Barbara Cothorn
Snohomish County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dave Somers
Snohomish County |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rep. Cheryl Pflug
WA State House of Reps. | <input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Christopher Hurst
WA State House of Reps. | <input type="checkbox"/> Sen. Margarita Prentice
WA State Senate |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sen. Julia Peterson (Alt.)
WA State Senate | | |

Staff and Observers

Johannes Kurz, Snohomish County
Bruce Nurse, Kemper Development
Chris Johnson, KC Council

Kim Becklund, Bellevue

Project Management Team

Mike Cummings, WSDOT
Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates
Keith McGowan, McGowan Environmental
Ron Anderson, DEA
Phil Fordyce, WSDOT

Paul Bergman, PRR
Brian O'Sullivan- Sound Transit
Ann Martin, King County

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kargianis called the meeting to order and stated the focus of the meeting would be to:

- Update on Program Status and Schedule
- Review EIS Status & Schedule
- Public Involvement Feedback
- Subcommittee Report
- Preferred Alternative Refinements

He added they would also be getting some feedback from the Funding and Phasing Subcommittee that had been set up to look at funding issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Kargianis asked if any members of the public had any comments they would like to provide the committee. No public comments were given. Chairman Kargianis turned the meeting over Mike Cummings, WSDOT, for presentations.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Cummings reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule. The Executive Committee will meet again on May 30 and June 28 at the Kirkland City Hall. The August 16th meeting is of significance, as the Executive Committee will be making a decision on the preferred alternative (PA).

Mr. Cummings recapped the brown bag meetings held in February and March. Over one hundred people, including good representation from the Steering Committee and the Trans-Lake group, attended the March 12th meeting. Thirty plus people attended the March 28th brown bag, and positive feedback was received.

The committees are currently in the Draft EIS Phase of the I-405 Program. It includes a number of upcoming public involvement events (open houses and hearings). They anticipate that the Draft EIS will be issued in June, and the next key target date is in August when a decision on the Preferred Alternative is expected.

Mr. Cummings reviewed some of the recent Speakers Bureau engagements. Among the visits were the League of Women Voters, and 1000 Friends of Washington. A public open house is planned for Renton on April 26th. He encouraged other jurisdictions to sponsor their own open houses similar to the one Renton is sponsoring. In addition to the Speaker Bureau, they will hold three public hearings during mid-July 16, 17, 18. These hearings will be held at locations along the North, Middle, and South areas of the corridor.

A new feature on the program web site is a Community Feedback page where correspondence will be stored. Currently, a letter received from the Kenndale Neighborhood Association has been posted on the site. This organization expressed concern over use of the Burlington Northern R/W (BNSF). The Bellevue Downtown Association also sent in a letter of support for Alternative Three and that the program should work toward a ten-year implementation schedule.

The project management team will work on responses to these comments. The jurisdiction and agency letters will all be posted and then summarized at committee meetings.

Mr. Cummings reviewed the EIS status and schedule. The Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (PDEIS) was distributed on April 10th. Comments were due April 20th at 10:00 AM. The program co-leads, Sound Transit, Washington State Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and King County, are reviewing comments. They may also meet with various agencies on May 7 if further response is required. Chairman Kargianis asked when the DEIS would be release. Mr. Cummings responded the plan is to try and issue the DEIS on June 18, 2001.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Paul Bergman, PRR, summarized the public involvement objectives and activities carried out so far in 2001. The objectives were to obtain project visibility, inform the public about the preliminary preferred alternative, and obtain input. The activities included a newsletter, two public open houses, an updated website, a public opinion survey, meeting with editorial boards from the Eastside Journal and the Seattle Times, media kits, and comment form.

Mr. Bergman allowed the members to review a binder of comments received from the newsletter comment form. He also talked about the open houses. Mr. Bergman said that the general feedback from all of the public involvement activities was the slight favoring of Alternative 3 over Alternative 2.

Mr. Bergman summarized the methodology and key findings from the public opinion telephone survey. The survey was conducted such that the corridor was divided into three regions: north, south, and central. Using census data, a representative population was questioned so that the survey would be statistically valid. The results were presented as mean scores to emphasize the variance. He said that cumulative percentages could also be made available upon request. The key findings of the public opinion survey were:

- Transportation issues are somewhat or very serious.
- The respondents thought the biggest congestion problems were in the region they lived in.
- The public thought the economy is being adversely affected by congestion and a solution needs to be found, new funding is needed, and new traffic lanes and an HCT (characterized as rail) system should be part of the solution.
- The public did not think new lanes should be paid for by those who use them, that people should get used to the congestion, nor that a transportation solution would hurt the environment.
- The respondents strongly supported trip reduction strategies and expanding bus service.
- There was support for adding more lanes and an HCT system.
- There was little support for tolls and widening neighborhood streets.

Upon request, the data may be broken up into jurisdictions and demographics. These results will also be released to the press.

Question of comments on the presentation included:

- Mayor Ives requested a breakout of the survey results for Redmond. She added that the comments she was reading on the forms were very interesting and encouraged others to take some time to go through them.
- Councilmember Somers asked why the comment forms for the newsletter rated the addition of GP lanes the lowest of all the concepts. Mr. Bergman responded that one

of the reasons for the low rating could be the location of the Renton open house near I-405 may have encouraged those opposed to expansion to provide comments. He added that the overall rating for adding GP lanes was still very positive, but not as strong as the other concepts. Councilmember Somers asked if people were asked to choose between one or two lane additional GP lanes. Mr. Bergman responded that they were not asked to distinguish one or two lanes.

FUNDING AND PHASING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Cummings discussed how the I-405 team is responding to requests for proposed program funding and phasing of the program. WSDOT has been asked to provide numerous scenarios despite the fact that a preferred alternative has not been determined and there has only been limited discussion on phasing. Their objective is to maintain the current process while dealing with these requests.

Mr. Cummings explained that a special Executive Committee Meeting was held the previous week to discuss how the WSDOT should respond to legislature activity. The committee felt this program should take a leadership role, and they formed a subcommittee to look at how to fashion a response to these issues without jeopardizing process (having not selected a preferred alternative). Subcommittee members include:

- Councilmember McKenna (Chair)
- Councilmember Cothorn
- Councilmember Marshall
- Mayor Mullet
- Councilmember Paylor
- Mayor Putter
- Harold Taniguchi

Guiding principles developed by the subcommittee:

- Attempt to make all improvements at once -"get in, get out"
- Do it as fast as possible (10 years)
- Support Reforms; Design Build, Permit Streamlining, etc.
- Coordinate Actions with other projects (Trans-Lake, Sound Transit, etc.)

Other issues discussed included:

- Ballot schedule and coordination
- Snohomish County representation
- Regional/large project funding
- Funding sources and bonding
- Cost estimates and level of detail

Councilmember Somers asked for a clarification of the Snohomish County representation issue. Councilmember McKenna responded they would really like to have representation from Snohomish County on the subcommittee. Mr. Cummings added that they thought Councilmember Cothorn had volunteered to serve but there might have been some miscommunication about this. Councilmember Somers responded that he would coordinate with Councilmember Cothorn.

David Dye, WSDOT, reviewed current design build legislation efforts with members and how the concept works. Chairman Kargianis asked if it has a modified bidding process. Mr. Dye responded that it would.

Mr. Dye reviewed environmental permit streamlining legislative efforts. Chairman Kargianis asked how much time this would save in getting projects implemented. Mr. Dye responded it could cut design and permitting time in half, but not build time. Chairman Kargianis responded that if they could save 10 – 15% this would be great.

Sen. Horn gave a presentation on transportation bills being considered by the legislature. Several of the bills in Olympia that deal with regional funding are getting a lot of support. He emphasized his bill is the only one that holds hope to meet a 10-year implementation time frame. In addition, three areas across the state could benefit from the bill.

The bill would set up a congestion relief board (CRB) by legislative district. 122,000 people would live in each district, 2 ½ million people would be covered or 20 districts would be set up. There are many transit providers within the area that have taxing authority and they do not want to duplicate the taxing authority they already have. The CRB would pick the projects they want to address. But if they spread funding to all the projects in the area they will not solve the major problems. The goal is to focus funds on specific projects in a phased approach. Taxes would create \$7 billion in the region. If they assume 60 percent state funding, it would generate \$17 – 18 billion total package of funding. If the CRB decides to undertake I-405 and Trans-lake, they would use most of the money up. The challenge is to pick some level of projects to work on.

They could also modify boundaries if districts do not want to be a part of CRB. Or other districts could opt in. The legislature is still working on defining districts and how they would work. If approved by the legislature the plan would be sent to county legislative authority for approval.

If the counties accept the plan, and it then goes on the ballot, the CRB would be set up and projects identified. Counties could reject members on CRB and can pick their own members. At the end of a project's completion, taxes will go away and the CRB goes away. But it could set up again if voters approve it.

Chairman Kargianis asked if the reform packages would help solve issues with contracting. Sen. Horn responded that they would. But he could not see the CRB getting into contracting projects; they would act more like the board of directors of project staff. Chairman Kargianis pointed out that a majority vote of the entire group means one district couldn't hold up projects or approval on ballot.

Aubrey Davis stated that the question is what new money will be available statewide. Sen. Horn responded they have committed to work on a statewide package if the CRB bill goes through. Any transit projects would get money from a state package.

Sen. Horn added that a recent survey showed strong support for fixing I-405 and SR-167 in recent opinion poll, this included Seattle support. This approach seems the only way to get problems solved. There will be limited support for statewide plan without CRB authority.

Mayor Ives asked what \$6 –7 billion would mean for residents. Sen. Horn responded that revenue details would be worked out as the package goes forward. Mayor Ives asked if it would show up on her individual bill. Chairman Kargianis responded that different taxes would be collected by various mechanisms.

Councilmember McBride asked if the discussion was on the agenda. Chairman Kargianis responded that he felt it was good information to have; ultimately funding will determine if projects get implemented. Councilmember McBride responded that she would need to take information to her city and needs to know if the subcommittee endorses this bill. Councilmember McKenna responded that no bills have been endorsed.

Councilmember Marshall asked if the committee has a preferred alternative, will the CRB implement other ideas than what comes out of their efforts. Sen. Horn responded that he believes they are committed to what comes out of this effort.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE REFINEMENTS

Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates, reviewed the key components of the preliminary preferred alternative with the members:

- TDM – increase vanpools, public information, employer based programs, land use TDM, employ innovative TDM strategies, and add infrastructure
- Roadway - add 2 general purpose lanes, improve 167 and the interchange, enhance capacity of connecting freeways
- HOV – improve direct access
- Arterial HOV – create lanes, intersection queue jumps, and signal priority
- Transit/HCT – expand by 100% (double # hours of service), preserve options for BNSF, look at options for interface with Trans-Lake
- Coordinating an HCT system with Trans-Lake - rail system on SR520, BRT on SR520, and rail on I-90
- Park and Ride locations – provide additional capacity
- Transit Centers – expand existing centers
- ITS – continue implementation of ITS strategies
- Freight Mobility – improve interchange with 167 and geo-metrics
- Managed Lane analysis – continue analysis on high occupancy toll
- Non-motorized travel – continue analysis

The PMT has held meetings with most of the local jurisdictions and agencies to get a sense of the key issues that need to be resolved prior to selecting a preferred alternative. Feedback the PMT has received in meetings with local jurisdictions and the Citizen Committee on these concepts includes:

- TDM package
 - Clarify contents
 - What to do about pricing
 - How to capture trip reduction?
- Freeway
 - Number of mainline lanes vs. auxiliary lanes
 - Lane balance
 - Connecting freeway capacity needs
 - SR 167 widening- south end transition; tie to I-405
 - Identify how managed lanes fit in with concept
 - GP vs. Auxiliary Lanes: Does this match demand?
- Arterials
 - Connecting arterial widening needs- how much, how far?
 - Look at converting GP lanes to HOV on 6-lane arterials
 - SR 202 over-crossing of SR 522 and express lanes
- Arterial HOV:
 - HOV Lanes, queue-jumps, signal priority?

- Bus Rapid Transit:
 - Refine service concept
 - Flexibility on alignments (e.g. I-405 vs BNSF)
 - HOV direct access design concepts
 - Future conversion to light rail
 - Agency coordination
 - Define local bus service concept and level of service (50 – 100%)
- Central Core Definition
 - Bus service- how many hours of service are appropriate?
 - BNSF- What is our strategy? Neighborhood Issues
- Freight and ITS: provide further specifics
- Non-motorized: Consider including long trails
- Define how managed lanes would operate
- Legality of managed lanes
- Coordination with Translake
- Environmental Mitigation/Enhancement
- Lids, Early Environmental Action, Noise
- Leverage stream enhancement funding
- Implementation Plan
- What kind of phasing plan?
- Funding status? Keep costs in front of effort
- Identify fall back position funding efforts fail
- Definition of element benefits

Questions or comments regarding the preliminary preferred alternative concepts included:

- Councilmember McBride stated Kirkland would like to add long trails back into the preferred.
- Regarding TDM, Chairman Kargianis asked if vanpools pay for themselves. Mr. Samdahl responded that they have included in operating costs as a vanpool subsidy. Councilmember McKenna added that operator costs currently cover this and that 75 – 100 % of costs are recovered. If they offer a subsidy they could grow market. Mr. Samdahl responded they would bring more detailed vanpool cost information back to the committee.
- Chairman Kargianis stated that more trip reduction information would be helpful-- TDM is very popular.
- Regarding transit, Councilmember McKenna asked if they can barrier separate lanes. Mr. Samdahl responded that this was the concept. Councilmember McKenna added that he recently read an article from a San Diego paper on BRT – they should get it. BRT is getting good ridership in San Diego; it got up and running very quickly, with low capital costs.
- Regarding preserving the BNSF right-of-way, Aubrey Davis asked if this assumes they are buying it. Mr. Samdahl responded that it does. Mr. Davis responded that they should explore other options for preserving it other than buying it. They might be able to lease it. Chairman Kargianis stated that this was a good point and they needed additional information on this. Councilmember Somers added that he would like to preserve this option, including connections into Snohomish County. Councilmember Corman asked if there was some way to preserve by using easements; perhaps this would relieve community concerns on what is going on with this concept. Mayor Putter stated that he attended a Port of Seattle meeting where two commissioners expressed interest in spending funding of \$35 million a year on

transportation improvements. Chairman Kargianis asked if he could make an inquiry into this.

- Regarding managed lanes, Chairman Kargianis asked if funds for BRT would be available. Mr. Cummings responded that they have not asked who's paying for this yet; they know Sound Transit and King County have some funds; this is one issue the new subcommittee will be looking at. Councilmember McKenna added that this is an important issue; they will need TDM and transit components up and running before construction starts for any freeway implementation.

Chairman Kargianis thanked the members for attending and the meeting adjourned.